

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A communication system comprising:

a first wireless network;

a mobile service station, the mobile service station comprising a plurality of network devices and a battery power supply;

the plurality of network devices together forming a second wireless network operating as a subnetwork in the first wireless network; and

at least one of the plurality of network devices participating on the first wireless network to provide access for others of the plurality of network devices to the first wireless network.

2. The communication system of claim 1 wherein one of the plurality of network devices comprising an access server.

3. The communication system of claim 2 wherein the access server participates as a slave device in the first wireless network pursuant to a first communication protocol and as a master device in the second wireless network pursuant to a second communication protocol.

4. The communication system of claim 3 wherein the access server resolves conflicts between the first and second communication protocols.

5. The communication system of claim 1 wherein the at least one of the plurality of network devices participates as a slave device in the first wireless network pursuant to a first communication protocol and as a master device in the second wireless network pursuant to a second communication protocol.

6. The communication system of claim 1 wherein one of the plurality of network devices other than the at least one of the plurality of network devices participates as a slave device in the first wireless network pursuant to a first communication protocol and as a slave device in the second wireless network pursuant to a second communication protocol.

7. A communication system comprising:  
a wireless premises network;  
a wireless peripheral subnetwork having a relatively shorter range than the wireless premises network;  
a mobile network device capable of communicating with the wireless premises network and the wireless peripheral subnetwork; and

a mobile service station having a battery power supply, the mobile service station configured to receive the mobile network device in mounting relation therewith, thereby providing the mobile network device access to the battery power supply.

8. The communication system of claim 7 wherein the mobile network device participates on the peripheral subnetwork when the mobile network device is within the relatively shorter range of the peripheral subnetwork.

9. The communication system of claim 7 further comprising a peripheral device disposed on the mobile service station which participates in the peripheral subnetwork.

10. The communication system of claim 7 wherein the mobile network device participates as a slave device in the wireless premises network pursuant to a first communication protocol while participating as a master device in the peripheral subnetwork pursuant to a second communication protocol.

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11. The communication system of claim 10 wherein the mobile network device resolves conflicts between the first and second communication protocols.

12. The communication system of claim 7 wherein the mobile network device enters a state of low power consumption when not communicating with either the wireless premises network or the peripheral subnetwork.

13. The communication system of claim 7, the wireless

premises network having a first plurality of network devices  
and the peripheral subnetwork having a second plurality of  
network devices such that when within range of one of the  
5 second plurality of network devices, the mobile network device  
participates as a master device in the peripheral subnetwork  
and when within range of one of the first plurality of network  
devices, the mobile network device participates as a slave  
device in the wireless premises network.

14. The communication system of claim 7 further  
comprising:

a network device independent of the mobile network  
device;

5 means within the network device for identifying a  
range value indicative of the distance between the network  
device and the mobile network device;

the network device responsive to the identifying  
means by transmitting the range value to the mobile network  
10 device; and

the mobile network device, upon receipt of the range  
value, identifying an appropriate data rate for subsequent  
transmission to the network device.

15. The communication system of claim 7 further  
comprising:

a network device independent of the mobile network

device;

5                means within the network device for identifying a  
range value indicative of the distance between the network  
device and the mobile network device; and

              the network device responsive to the identifying  
means by indicating to the mobile network device an appropriate  
10            rate for subsequent data transmission to the network device.

16. The communication system of claim 7 further  
comprising:

              a premises network device independent of the mobile  
network device;

5                means within the network device for identifying a  
range value indicative of the distance between the network  
device and the mobile network device;

              the network device responsive to the identifying  
means by transmitting the range value to the mobile network  
10            device;

              means within the mobile network device for  
identifying battery parameter information; and

              the mobile network device, based on the received  
range value and battery parameter information, identifying an  
15            appropriate data rate and power level for subsequent  
transmission to the network device.

17. A communication system to facilitate a transaction,  
the communication system comprising:

a first communication network comprising a first  
network device for capturing transaction information, and for  
5 generating therefrom code information representative of the  
transaction information;

said first communication network further comprising  
a code printer for printing the code information in printed  
code form; and

10 a second communication network comprising a service  
station, the service station comprising a second network device  
for reading the printed code and for accessing therefrom the  
captured transaction information.